

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY

COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Meeting held at Office of the Chief State's Attorney, Rocky Hill CT

February 9, 2006

ATTENDEES: Deb Arrieta, DEMHS; Cheryl Assis, CRCOG; William Austin, WHFD/CREPC; Timothy Baldwin, Southbury FD; Brenda Bergeron, DEMHS; Leonard Boyle, DPS; Peter Boynton, USCG; Sandra C. Brown, Hartford Hospital; Richard Brown, New London; Matt Bruns, CREPC; John Buturla, New Haven; Kristin Dean, CRCOG; Douglas Dortenzio, Wallingford PD; Michael Edgerton, USCG; Marian Evans, BHD; Jack Farr, Rocky Hill FD; John Field, LH/NW Public Safety; Kerry Flaherty, DEMHS; Thomas Flaherty, POSTC; Tom Gavaghan, DEMHS; Libby Graham, DEMHS; Leonard Guercia, DPH; William Hackett, DEMHS; Betsy Hard, Bloomfield PD; Lenworth Jacobs, Hartford Hospital; Don Janelle, Manchester; Melanie Kerr, DEMHS; Thad King, Chatham Health District; Bob Labanara, CCM; Walt Lippincott, Military; Michael Maglione, Waterbury FD; Jim Mona, DOT; Jeff Morrisette, CFPC; Daniel O'Brien, AMR; Jim O'Leary, COST; Bill Palomba, DPUC; Brad Parker, East Haddam; Doug Pesce, DHS; Raymond Philbrick, DPW; Susan Rainville, POSTC; Ken Rigney, DEMHS; Peter Rockholz, DMHAS; Wayne Sandford, DEMHS; John Shaw, MMRS; Gary Stango, PSAP's; Dan Stebbins, USAH; Jim Strillacci, West Hartford PD; Maggie Targove, New Haven/UASI; James Thomas, DEMHS; Lee Toffey, DEMHS; Tom Vannini, LHCOG; Daniel Warzoha, Greenwich; Edward Wilds, DEP.

I. WELCOME AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- A. Meeting called to order by Commissioner Thomas at 0915 hours, and Pledge of Allegiance.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A. Dan Warzoha of Greenwich spoke on behalf of Greenwich and the SWRPA region regarding Cooperative Planning. SWRPA believes that emergency notification is a top priority for their area and began work in 2003 on a reverse notification system. In 2005 they, in conjunction with CRCOG, began compiling information to be reviewed and implemented by the State of Connecticut for a statewide system. As a result, SWRPA put their RFP on hold so the area could become compliant with whatever the statewide system turned out to be. The events of December 2005 have caused the region to re-visit this issue. Had they stayed their original course, an emergency notification system would have been in place and would have been of great help during the storms in December. This has resulted in a public outcry on why the original plan was not followed. Greenwich and SWRPA are requesting answers in regards to a set time line and plan for the State's RFP for Emergency Notification.

Commissioner Thomas responded to this issue under the Interoperability Committee report.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

- A. Motion made to accept the minutes of the January meeting by Doug Dortenzio; seconded by Tim Baldwin; approved unanimously.

IV. COMMUNICATION RECEIVED

- A. Letters received from the John Field of the Northwest CT/Litchfield Hills Public Safety Task Force and Jack Travers of the Northwestern CT Council of Governments. Both letters urged the continued support of a regional approach to emergency operations planning.

V. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Interoperability Committee – presented by Commissioner Thomas in the absence of Mike Varney. 1) The bid is out for the catalog radio contract and an award can be expected by the end of February. 2) A meeting is scheduled for February 15th of the Technical Sub-committee with regard to Emergency Notification System. Hoping to have the RFP in place by the end of March. This is a top priority. 3) The STOCs system had an unplanned test in Canton recently when a prototype was used by the Tactical Team effectively. 4) Fairfield County Chiefs two day workshop included an explosive exercise, very informative. 5) Chief Doug Dortenzio advised that he remembered a legal opinion being given by the Attorney General with regard to Emergency Notification Systems and access to the database. He was wondering if there were legal issues to consider. Deputy Commissioner Sandford advised that the question as to who actually owns the database, the State or SBC, has not been answered. If it is State owned, can it be accessed for emergency purposes only? Waiting for an answer from the Attorney General. Chief Austin asked why CT was different from other states and how was this handled in East Haven when the Deputy Commissioner was there. Deputy Commissioner stated that when they attempted to access the database they were told no, but that a database could be purchased. Jim O’Leary stated that if the system is used for emergencies only, you lose the value that it has for other purposes such as school closings or activation of the Public Works Dept. Deputy Commissioner Sandford advised that if you wanted to use the system for non-emergency uses, you would probably have to buy the database. It would be stagnant and any new info would need to be manually entered.

- B. Citizen Corp Advisory Council – Chief Bill Austin stated that 2006 funding has doubled, and that the President has proposed an increase for the 2007 fiscal year. 2) The Statewide Committee will be represented at the convention in California in May. 3) Considerable help has come from the American Legion and the Military. The goal this year was to recruit 1000 additional people. Currently there are 560 people anticipating training and 180 people currently being trained. The committee is still contending with people who do not have a sincere commitment to the program.

Commissioner Thomas asked the Area Coordinators and all to reach out to the American Legion as they are a large and organized group who is always willing to help, and has a special interest in the CERT concept.

- C. Credentialing Committee – Mike Spera was not present and no report was given.
- D. Training Committee – had not yet met so no report was available. Dr. Lenworth Jacobs stated that an enormous amount of material has been purchased but that almost no energy has been put into training on the equipment or training as a team. Commissioner Thomas responded that all recruits in the Police Academy are being trained on the equipment and that many train-the-trainer courses have been held so persons can go back and train the people in their respective departments. Jeff Morrisette advised that due to attrition and competing training, it may be difficult to keep equipment training on the training officer's radar.
- E. Incident Management Teams – Jim Mona stated that the Committee had its first meeting and now has a mission and some goals. They are looking into the NYC process for Incident Management, as it is one of the few certified teams in the country, and hope to review the information gathered within two weeks. Committee plans to address and make recommendations for recruitment, training, and the cost of equipment. If any other disciplines are interested in participating in the process, please contact him.
- F. Mutual Aid Legislative Subcommittee – Chief Betsy Hard advised that the committee had its first meeting and feels that Mutual Aid will be an in depth project. They are attempting to keep the committee small but would like a representative from DPW to become a member. The committee identified goals, and has asked committee members to look at the mutual aid protocols for each discipline. Standardized protocols, for example for EMS providers, would make mutual aid easier to implement. Most legislation deals with Mutual Aid during disasters but it may also need to be looked at as a response tool. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 7th at the DEMHS office. Len Guercia requested that Public Health be included in the subcommittee. Dr. Evans said she will be glad to participate. They have a group of eight in public health that have mutual aid compacts already.

VI. UPDATES

- A. Grant Program – presented by Libby Graham.
 - 2003 - DEMHS is continuing to work with DPS and a draft grant application is in place that will move 1.7 million dollars to DEMHS for the purchase of cots, Mass Casualty Trailers and Shelter trailers, and NIMS training.
 - 2004 – Currently over \$10 million in requests have been processed. Much of this has been spent on preparedness items such as: Toughbooks, Personal ID systems, Security, PPE equipment, Search & Rescue equipment, Decontamination supplies and equipment, generators, and equipment storage containers. This will increase once the radio and emergency notification contracts are in place. Unit is poised to implement plan for bomb squads to all be at the same equipment level.
 - 2005 – 2.5 million dollars in requests processed. Some of this is Staff costs under EMPG and preparedness activities.
 - 2006 – The Unit has been working diligently on the planning process and the application that is due March 2nd. Fact finding is completed and a meeting is scheduled for February 14 to prioritize the needs list. This will also help to allocate the resources and the priorities will feed the plan going to Washington.

Please attend this very important meeting or send a representative in your place. Libby explained the scoring criteria. The State will be asking for much more than the 7 million dollar base allocation; but is likely to receive less than is requested. Commissioner Thomas spoke on the port security grant. Ken Rigney of DEMHS will be the liaison. The Critical Infrastructure Unit has done an extensive report on each of the ports and this Unit will assist and support the efforts of the three port cities as they apply for these grant monies with DOT. Collaboration should help to increase funds for the State. Chuck Beck is the DOT liaison for port security. Captain Peter Boynton advised that as soon as the package is received they will brief all involved and is hopeful that the State will be more competitive than in the past.

- B. NIMS – Deputy Commissioner Sandford stated that the three Chief Elected Officials NIMS seminars scheduled are getting a great response. The Northwest and Northeast corners have both requested a seminar in their area, so 2 more will be planned for the coming weeks. Registration is 120 people to date. NIMS training is available at both the Fire Academy and Police Academy and packages with updates are ready so training can continue. The Fire Academy has given 36 courses so far.
- C. CTIC – Commissioner Thomas advised that the group was unable to meet. The next meeting is scheduled for February 17. CSP Trooper Mike Kowal, who had taken a leadership role, was activated and sent to Iraq. He along with Steve Shiner have challenged the group to come up with a budget for laptops and equipment. The secure network, Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN), will be tested soon. This is a no cost to the state; it is live information sharing resource. Incremental steps towards a fusion center are being taken. CTIC continues to send out weekly bulletins and emergency information as necessary.
- D. Urban Search & Rescue –Deputy Commissioner Sandford stated the USAR advisory board has been re-activated and will hold its first meeting on February 14. With regular meetings this committee should provide guidance for future growth. New equipment has been arriving. USAR was not included on the January bonding agenda, but will try again for February to obtain money for radios, vehicles, etc.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Evacuation Planning - PowerPoint presented by Director Kerry Flaherty. Phase 1 was submitted on January 17. Currently in Phase 2 through March 1st. State agencies and local police are providing evacuation routes out of the State. Team is assembling GIS data for shelters and evacuation routes (lane closures, etc.). Once done, this information will go to the towns, and public messaging will be created to support evacuation needs. Phase 3 runs from March 2nd through April 20th. A review team from the Federal Government will review the plan and observe the SNS (Strategic National Stockpile) exercise. This must be completed by May 1st.

- B. Pandemic Flu Update – Presented by Len Guercia. Connecticut is earmarked by the CDC to receive 1.34 million dollars which should be available sometime in March. There were no extra monies for hospital planning. Waiting for more guidance and information regarding the performance period, what portion is state vs. local, purchase of anti-viral meds, etc. Will be looking at current existing initiatives in the state, and planning monies must be used for updating state and local plans. No personnel can be hired with this money. The governor's Pandemic Flu seminar held on February 2 was a success.
- C. Discussion and vote on Regional Boundaries: Cheshire, Plymouth, East Haddam – Town requests – Plymouth wishes to go to Area 5; Cheshire wishes to stay in Area 2; East Haddam wishes to go to Area 3. Discussion. Motion made and then rescinded by Jim O'Leary. Discussion continued. Motion made by Len Guercia to allow the three changes requested and then have a moratorium on any further changes until after August of 2006. Seconded by Chief Austin, unanimously approved.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Request for support from Police Chief' Association – Presented by Chief Jim Strillacci – The Police Chief's Association is requesting the support of the DEMHS Coordinating Council in its attempt to pass legislation allowing local officers to have arrest powers across the state. Reasons include but are not limited to: practical in this day of terrorism; would facilitate mutual aid between departments; allows towns and regions to work together on projects like drug interdiction; would allow one department to charge suspects in incidents that cross town lines (ex. motor vehicle chases); would have a deterrent effect across the entire state. Discussion ensued. Gary Stango made a motion to support the request, seconded by Betsy Hard. Commissioner Len Boyle of the Department of Public Safety requested that the issue be tabled until the next meeting so he can more fully prepare a response. Gary Stango withdrew his motion, and the issue was postponed until the next meeting.
- B. Presented by Commissioner Thomas: 1) Vice Admiral Thad Allen of the U.S.C.G. will be speaking at Rentschler Field on February 23, regarding hurricanes Katrina and Rita; 2) CT Police Academy will be hosting operation Safeguard, also at Rentschler Field on April 5th; 3) The Terrorism Liaison Conference will take place on March 7 & 8 at Rentschler Field. The topic is Preparedness and Response to Suicide & IED Bombings; 4) At the request of the Governor, CT broadcasting, CPTV, and CT-N are all working with DEMHS to improve emergency notification; 5) DEMHS is working on posters with the TIPS Hotline that includes artwork from the Commission on Children's Poster and Word contest on Terrorism; and, 6) Renovations are taking place at the Emergency Operations center (EOC). A future meeting may be planned there so all can see the improvements.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Upcoming drills:

March – Flood Drill in East Hartford/Hartford

April – Strategic National Stockpile

May – Radiological Drill

June – CCM running program for volunteers, training, resource tying. Etc.

X. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Dan O'Brien; seconded by Ed Wilds; Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 1115 hours by Commissioner Thomas.

IX. NEXT MEETING – March 9, 2006, Office of the Chief State's Attorney, Rocky Hill.